MURDER AT THE MANSION
2 OF 3

MORRISON JIMENEZ LANNING

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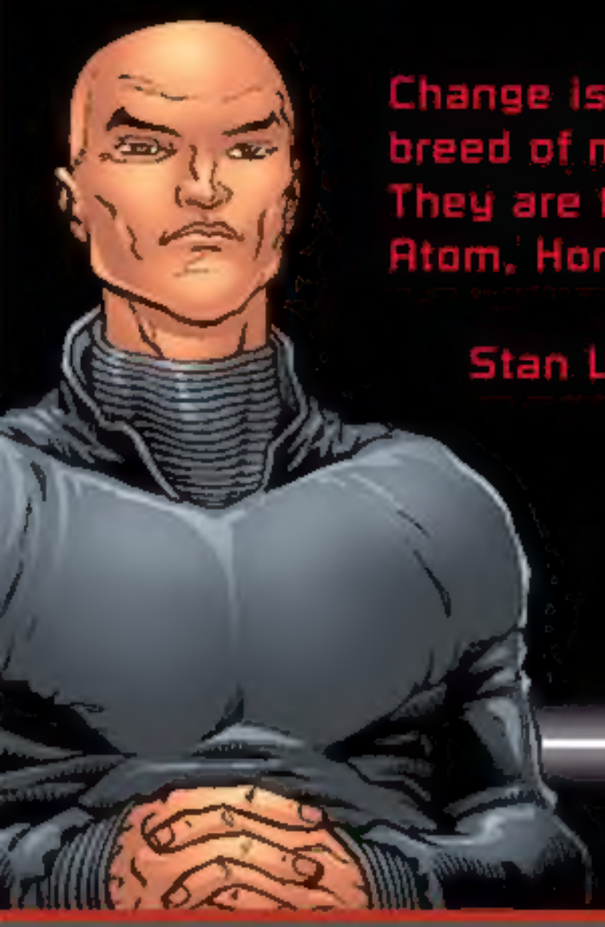

Change is coming. A new breed of man has emerged. They are the Children of the Atom. Homo superior.

Stan Lee presents...

NEW X-MEN®

MURDER AT THE MANSION 2 OF 3

PREVIOUSLY

THE X-MEN are a worldwide team of mutant volunteer workers gifted with new evolutionary talents. They are a rescue and emergency force on the front line of the genetic battlefield of the 21st Century. Founded and financed by the brilliant telepath PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER, the X-Men are forever sworn to protect a world that hates and fears them.

But at the XAVIER INSTITUTE – X-Men headquarters and a school founded to teach young mutants how to use their powers responsibly – not everything is as it should be. The last several weeks have seen the school in an unsettling state of disarray, due in large part to several key factors: an in-house "riot" instigated by one of Xavier's prize pupils, Quentin Quire; the growing use of a new power-enhancing designer drug called "Kick"; the revelation of Scott Summers and Emma Frost's "psychic" affair; and now, worst of all, a lethal threat that has surfaced from within. While in her diamond form, it appears as though Emma Frost has been shot, and now lies scattered in a million crystal pieces on the floor of Xavier's school.

Enter mutant detectives BISHOP and SAGE, on loan from their adventures with the X-Treme X-Men team. With Bishop's invaluable police work experience, and Sage's near computer-like brain, this detecting duo hopes to answer the question running through everyone's minds at Xavier's – who shot Emma Frost?

BISHOP
Energy Blasts

SAGE
Computer Mind

EMMA FROST
Telepath, Diamond Skin

JEAN GREY
Telepath

BEAST
Super Strength, Agility

XORN
Healer

ANGEL
Wings, Flight

BEAK
Wings, Flight

STEPFORD CUCKOOS
Telepathic Collective

PROFESSOR X
Telepath

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Salem Center, New York...

From the case files of Lucas Bishop: Sage Recording:

Lockdown began at 4:55 EST:

No one in.

XAVIER INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER LEARNING

XAVIER INSTITUTE

No one out.

MURDER AT THE MANSION

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You want to see the *body*, Lucas?

She's not *really* dead.

I *know* she's not... a mind like Emma's...

Henry... there's no chance.

She looks pretty dead to me... and quite frankly, good riddance.

It's going to be hard narrowing this down-- *nobody* liked her.

Well, I did.

Part 10035 -- a section of aortal valve.

She was a good listener. She laughed at my jokes. She knew every line of *Byron* by heart.

She managed to turn to *diamond form*, but the bullet hit her *flaw*. I tried to find all the pieces.

It's just an incredibly intricate biological *jigsaw*...

I used to *love* jigsaw puzzles when I was younger.

So?

I'm the *least* likely and therefore *most* likely suspect?

Well, I was at the *opera*-- "*Orfeo*" with Emma's girls.

I do intend to put her back together, you know.

Sure, Henry.

Keep us posted.

XAVIER INSTITUTE

Looks like things haven't been going *too well,* Professor Xavier...

I admit, it was *hard* to come back to the school after the way Sage and I were *treated* last time.

Emma Frost was one of our *least* favorite people.

And there's something *else* I have to bring into the equation, Professor...

... *you've* been *possessed* before.

In a world of mindreaders, shapechangers and disembodied consciousnesses... crime takes on a *whole new meaning.*

Yes.

I've had to give some *serious thought* to this, Lucas.

Violence *haunts* us... my teaching methods seem to have *failed* in so many ways.

But I am *Charles Xavier,* Lucas.

This is the *real* me, not some alien impostor bent on world destruction.

Mr. Xorn healed my legs, *Jean* helped heal my mind...

...*neither* was able to restore my power to *dance.*

I understand.

Monsters don't usually *have* a sense of humor, Charles...

...but even they can *fake* it sometimes.

I'll see Xorn and his pupils now...

These are vulnerable children, Bishop. Please be careful with your interrogations.

All of them have been exploited and abused. They are very sensitive.

Say that again and I will have to *kill* you!

There is no such room as *"the toilet"* in *Clue!*

There is ***now!*** *"Professor Sex in the toilet with the lawnmower"*-- ***that's*** whodunnit!

=Hyukk=

I see what you ***mean.***

We have to interview ***everyone,*** Mr. Xorn.

I understand.

The girl, ***Angel.***

Alone.

Angel Salvadore?

Angel?

These people wish to discuss your relationship with Miss Frost.

What?

Who wants *what?*

What am I supposed to have *done?* I didn't have any *"relationship"!* What are you trying to *say?*

Nobody said you did *anything,* Angel.

You've seen the *TV,* you know how this works -- we have to question *everybody.*

Even *you,* Mr. Xorn.

Where were *you* when the White Queen died?

I did it!

I did it... hyukkk!

Meditating, I believe.

So Emma Frost took you on a shopping trip to Manhattan a few days before she was killed...

...what did you *talk* about then?

How should I know? She was all like "*You are my new project...*" and all...

...but mostly she was helping me choose a ***dress,*** mostly for the prizegiving...

CONTROL FREAK

CONTROL FREAK

I won a ***commendation.***

I have a certificate.

I ***know,*** Angel.

But do you remember exactly where you ***were*** when Miss Frost was shot?

What?

I don't even ***know*** when she was shot.

I'd have been with ***Beakie...*** we hang out.

Beakie?

...yes, I *completely* understand the necessity for this investigation, Mr. Bishop-- but I really *do* have to leave. I'm *meeting* someone shortly.

School ought to have *closed* for summer and this is a little unfair to the *non*-resident students.

I understand your impatience... Esme? Forgive me if I find it hard to tell you all *apart*...

I know you were Miss Frost's prize pupils, but I understand there was some kind of *falling out*... am I right?

Miss Frost taught us to conceal our emotions as a way of keeping one step *ahead*, Mr. Bishop.

It seems only *fair* to tell you that.

But you are right-- we did .

There were *five* of us, Mr. Bishop. *Sophie*, our dear sister, was killed in the school riots after Miss Frost *encouraged* her to do stupid, supposedly *heroic* things.

Ah...

Don't *do* that. Don't even *try* to read my mind, girls.

I absorb *psychic* energy as easily as all the other kinds.

Would what happened to Sophie... make any of you want to *hurt* Miss Frost?

Miss Frost taught us *everything* we know.

Yes, we were very angry with her, but whyever would we *ever* want to hurt our favorite teacher?

We were at the opera with *Doctor McCoy*... you can ask him.

Our minds were *traumatized* after what's happened...

"Orfeo"-- it was to cheer us up.

I can imagine.

Thank you, girls...

This is *hard* for me, Jean, but...

...you *fought* with Emma. She had some kind of telepathic affair going on with your husband, Scott.

By all accounts, you didn't pull any punches.

You think I killed her?

It's true, I have the *worst* temper, Bishop.

I run around the world preaching peace and brotherhood, and when I come home, the first thing I do is *fight*.

But I can only tell the truth.

Take a look for yourself.

Hi, Sage.

My God.

Lucas, what did you *see?*

I'm not sure I can *explain...*

...but I know she didn't do it.

11:36 AM

Sage analysis: No closer to a clear solution, we assemble the evidence, question the suspects and run possible scenarios.

Certain key questions are emerging from the mass of speculative data.

Foremost, where is the murder weapon?

Who supplied the drug called "Kick" we keep hearing so much about?

And why Emma Frost?

06:45 PM

Do that thing you do and send an *e-mail* with your mind, Sage... arrange for me to see the boys from the *Omega Skulls* gang in prison...

...I want to find that *Kick dealer.*

NY STATE MAXIMUM SECURITY PENITENTIARY...

Cop scum

Mutant trash

They should have nuked

Get in line.

Gonna die, pig

Exterminate your master race

Cut you into bits

Hi. Am I getting *out* of here?

Sergeant Bishop. They call you *"Redneck"*, right?

You ran with *Quentin Quire's* gang and helped provoke the riot at the Xavier School.

Am I getting out of here?

There are people who really *hate* mutants in here!

You and the others were high on the drug *Hypercortisone-D* during most of your vandalizing spree.

I want the *name* of your dealer, Redneck. Who's been dripping the poison into the school corridors?

You help me with that question, I'll see what I can do.

Questions?

What if I *don't know* the answers? It's like surviving the *jungle* in here!

I HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE I GET HURT!

I said...

...who was your *supplier?*

I don't know!

I was buying my inhalers direct from *Quentin,* same as the others.

You *have* to get me out of here!

I can just about generate the temperature of a two-bar electric heater in the bones of my hands.

But how am I supposed to *protect myself* against the daily persecution I'm getting?

All I know is this-- Quentin would go into the *woods* at the back of the school and later he'd come back with this little baggie filled with *inhalers* for each of us.

I never used drugs in my life before.

They only cost five dollars each... they made you feel like the *Incredible Hulk* ...

Sage?

Got all that?

Way *ahead* of you, Lucas.

I went for a walk to clear my head, and on the way I upgraded my sensory function.

I set it to detect traces of *Hypercortisone-D.*

Mushrooms?

No, *delete* that.

Kick inhalers.

Part 1700065 -- section of right index and ring fingers.

This is insane, Hank.

SNNF

Barnell? Are you all right?

Oh, Doctor McCoy...

... I was the one selling the *Kick* drug!

I KILLED MISS FROST!

There are definite signs of recent activity here.

Disturbed grass, broken branches.

She was going to tell and...

...I did it for *her*.

I did it for the *babies*...

...because...

...because no one must know...

There's something *here*, Lucas.

Living things.

And...

...I'm *not* alone.

No.

I think *this* is what you were looking for.

Who shot the White Queen?

TO BE CONTINUED...